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TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Can any of our readers favor us with a copy of the "Smoking Catch, to be sung by four men smoking their pipes, which is not more difficult to sing than diverting to hear," as mentioned in the Encyclopædia Britannica to be composed by Dr. Aldrich?

Colored Envelopes have been sent to many of our subscribers, which, we beg to remind them, signified that their subscriptions are in arrear. An early remittance will much oblige.

Review of New Music.

Cantica Ecclesiastica: A complete volume of Congregational Music. By Thomas Ions, Mus. Bac., Oxon.

The intention of the author in the publication of his book is to show the great utility of bringing into use a Congregational Handbook, from which the Sunday service can be ascertained and prepared. We write from authority that the system which is here sought to be established, has been already found highly beneficial, and the services improved, in the churches in which Mr. Ions's book has been used. Two editions of the *Cantica Ecclesiastica* have been published, "The small Vocal Score," and the "Folio Score" with accompaniments for organ with pedals; also an easy pianoforte arrangement, to suit small hands. We shall proceed to a description of the first-named, as the price at which it is published will conduce to place it within the reach of every member of the community. And here we would particularly invite the attention of ministers and organists to the great advantages which these publications present, tending as they do to produce a uniformity in the musical services of our churches, alike convenient to minister, organist, and congregation. The smaller book commences with instructions in the rudiments of vocal music, and some directions to be observed in chanting. This department of the work is followed by a table of the Sunday services throughout the year: the chants, psalms and verses, tune, and kyrie eleison. The advantage of following such a practice need scarcely be pointed out to those who have the control, or any share in the direction, of the musical church-service. An examination of this table has given us a very high sense of the talent and judgment of Mr. Ions, in whose church (St. Nicholas, Newcastle-on-Tyne,) the *Cantica Ecclesiastica* has been for some time in use.

The folio size contains an accompaniment to the psalm and hymn tunes for the organ, with pedals, "wherein," says the author, "the parts have been freely doubled." This arrangement has been inserted for the use of young organists, who will be sure to profit by it in their study of the organ. In addition to this, an easy accompaniment has been arranged for the pianoforte, in which the harmony is given to the right-hand, so that the youngest pupils may accomplish it.

A kind of supplement contains the canticles divided for chanting. A well-written preface, in which the history of metrical Psalmody is traced, is prefixed to the work.

The book contains 96 Psalm and Hymn Tunes, 32 Single and Double Chants, Eight Sanctuses, and 27 Kyrie Eleisons. The following well-known names are selected from among the numerous composers

whose works adorn the volume:—Handel, Haydn, Purcell, Crotch, Tallis, Ravenscroft, Attwood, Blow, Adams, Greene, Dupuis, Jones, Lord Mornington, Turle, &c.

The compositions by the Editor are of the highest merit, and his arrangements generally prove, not only the possession of great musical ability and sound knowledge, but an intelligence rarely to be met with. Mr. Ions has done infinite service to the cause he intends to serve, by the publication of this work.

To this book by Mr. Ions is affixed "The Morning, Evening, and Midnight Hymn, written by Bishop Kenn, and exceedingly well set to music by Mr. Joseph Garnett.—*Abridged from the Dramatic and Musical Review.*"

Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

JEDBURGH, ROXBURGHSHIRE.—A choral society has lately been established in this town, which is likely to prove eminently successful; it already numbers upwards of sixty members. The society's second concert took place on the 10th Dec. The choruses, which were chiefly selections from the *Messiah*, were executed with wonderful precision and accuracy. The success of the society is, in a great measure, to be attributed to the exertions of the conductor, Mr. E. Lockwood, organist of St. John's church. We believe this is the only society, in any of the small towns in Scotland, that has ventured to sing the *Messiah*. The wealthier portion of the community seems to take interest in the society's welfare.

DUNDEE CHORAL SOCIETY.—Romberg's *Lay of the Bell* was stated to be performed, for the first time in Scotland, at the public concert given by the Dundee choral society on the 20th November. It is strange to find that almost all the classical works performed in Scotland, are offered with a similar announcement. It speaks not much for the progress yet made; but Scotland is, at all events, now making a good beginning, and before many years are over, it is hoped the reproach will have ceased to apply to the larger towns at least. The *Northern Warder* speaks of this concert of the Dundee society with much praise.

UPTON, ST. LEONARD'S, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.—A choral society has been recently established here, under high patronage, presided over by the Rev. J. Clements, and conducted by the organist, Mr. E. T. Evans, for the promotion of sacred and secular music, more particularly the former. The society has obtained many patrons and members; and it is, and is likely to continue, in a flourishing state. An elementary class has also been established, to enable all who join it to take a part in the society. The first choral meeting, aided by several instrumental and vocal performers from Gloucester, will take place on the 8th of January, 1851.

DERBY.—Mendelssohn's oratorio of *Elijah* was performed on the 3rd of December, at the Lecture Hall. Public performances of sacred music upon a large scale, are very rare in Derby, but we trust that a better time is at hand. The *Derby Mercury*, speaking of this occasion, says:—"The inhabitants of Derby and its vicinity are indebted to the energy and enterprise of Mr. W. E. Gover, who, in this praiseworthy effort, has shown what can be achieved by the musical talent of the town and district, when once it is brought into favorable combination. Mr. W. E. Gover, we

believe, has had difficulties to combat, and prejudices to overcome; but resolute in his determination, and cheered by the approval and support of some of the first families in the county, he has now the satisfaction of knowing that he has afforded the greatest gratification to one of the largest and most influential audiences that ever assembled in Derby; and it is no slight merit to our young townsman, that he has had the courage to encounter the responsible task of introducing the sublimest work of one of the greatest of composers to the inhabitants. We trust this will not be the last opportunity we shall have of hearing this and other similar compositions in Derby. The propriety of giving entertainments on a large scale, at each of the three important towns (Derby, Leicester, and Nottingham), alternately, we understand was discussed after the performance, and we have no doubt that the project will be seriously considered. We shall be glad to give our support to the project, and trust it will be promptly and vigorously carried out.

BLACKBURN CHORAL SOCIETY.—The Performance of Handel's *Deborah*, with respect to which so widely extended an expectation had been raised, took place in the Blackburn Parish Church. There were present about two thousand persons. We understand that the Bishop of Manchester intended to have been present; but his Lordship was prevented by unavoidable engagements. In his letter of apology, however, he enclosed a donation of £5. The *Blackburn Standard* has a very long account of the performance which appears to have been in every way successful. The proceeds are to be devoted to the new Girls' Charity School in the All Saints' District. Altogether it may be said that no Oratorio has ever before been produced in Blackburn so complete in all the preparatory arrangements, and in the general features of the performance itself; though it may be true that one of a more attractive character may have been submitted to public appreciation. Venturing to express an opinion on the first hearing of a work of so elevated a description, we should say, that although the Oratorio of *Deborah* includes several airs of great beauty, some choruses of unquestionable power and effect, much light and beautiful instrumentation, and the whole exhibits the genius of the great master from whose hand it came,—it would not be likely, however frequently repeated, to attain to anything approaching the popularity of most of Handel's other compositions of similar importance. It is enough to point to the great success of the entire performance to show how much is due to the intelligence, the knowledge, the judgment, and the exertions of the conductor, Mr. Clough. The achievements of Thursday evening altogether, may most justly be regarded as the greatest triumph the Blackburn Choral Society has yet accomplished. It is intended to devote the proceeds "towards the incidental expenses of the new Girls' Charity School, in the All Saints' District, viz., the erection of the boundary wall, fixtures for the building, and other contingent charges, independent of the fabric itself."

MANCHESTER MADRIGAL SOCIETY.—Tuesday, December 17th. Programme.—Part I:—Lord for thy tender mercies' sake (Farrant); The nightingale in silent night (Wilbye); Now is the Month of Maying (Morley); The silver swan (O. Gibbons); Come away, sweet love (Greaves); Soft zephyr (Webbe);

Let me, careless (Linley); Flora gave me (Wilbye); The Dream (J. F. Leeson); Manchester; When winds breathe soft (Webbe). Part II:—Since first I saw your face (Ford); O sleep, fond fancy (Benet); Down in a flowery vale (Festa); You gave me your heart (Webbe); Sigh not, fond shepherd (Ferretti); Fair shepherd's queen (Marenzio); Now tune the viol (Caimo); Thirsis, sleepest thou? (Benet); Blest be the home (Benedict); The Waits (Saville). The members of this Society gave their annual dress concert in the Town Hall on Tuesday evening. We have on former occasions had the pleasure of remarking the care which is conspicuous in the getting up of the programme. The one before us is inferior to none of its predecessors; the ample and interesting explanatory remarks appended to the various pieces are very judiciously compiled, and contain much valuable information. The room was quite filled with a most respectable audience, and the concert terminated pretty nearly at the time announced, ten o'clock.

SHREWSBURY.—A new Organ was opened at St. Julian's Church, by Mr. Hiles, on the 15th December.

CHESTERFIELD.—A Correspondent has favored us with an account of another large instrument containing 37 stops, lately built for the Parish Church at Chesterfield.

CANTERBURY.—The music of Mozart's celebrated Requiem will be performed by the Canterbury Choral Society, on the 6th of January, to the words adapted to it by R. G. Loraine, Esq., and which is printed in the 8vo. edition of the three Favorite Masses. It is pleasant to find how much the public taste is on the increase, when such profound works can be enjoyed by a miscellaneous audience.

THE LYCEUM AND ITS ORCHESTRA.—A circular has been sent to us, stated to be "a brief statement of incontrovertible facts in relation to their recent retirement." It would appear to us that these frequent appeals to the public to decide between the engaged and the engager, in respect to theatrical matters, might be avoided, with advantage to the profession, by adopting more precise methods of stating the engagements between the parties, as is followed in most other business transactions. The public can rarely be properly informed of all the circumstances, and in most cases can offer no remedy to the aggrieved party when discovered.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.—On November 30, the Sacred Harmonic Society commenced the campaign of 1850-51 with the *Messiah*. It was their 227th concert in the great room of Exeter Hall, and their 56th performance of Handel's masterpiece in the same locality. The attendance betokened the subscription to be in a flourishing state; the building could not easily have been more crowded. We state this with pleasure, as no association in Europe exercises a more powerful influence on the highest interests of the musical art than the Sacred Harmonic Society. It is true that this society may be said to have a public of its own, which the most seductive attractions of a different character cannot tempt away—no contemptible proof, by the way, of the existence, so stoutly denied abroad, of a pure and cultivated taste for music in this metropolis, since very few short of 2,000 persons are requisite to fill the hall completely, while nothing but music of a serious and elevated order is to be heard

there. As much cannot be adduced of any other city in the Old World, much less the New. A new interest was attached to the performance, which, except the very first ever given in the large room of Exeter Hall, is likely to be chronicled as the most memorable and important in the history of the Sacred Harmonic Society. The alterations and improvements in the building, so long opposed by the committee of proprietors, and so obstinately advocated by the directors of the society, with Mr. Bowley, one of the most zealous and active members, at their head, have been accomplished during the recess, and their value was tested in a manner which must have satisfied the incredulous, as much as it delighted the indefatigable promoters of the change. As first constructed, and up to last year, Exeter Hall was, without exception, the very worst building, of any pretensions for musical effect, in England. At present, thanks to the recent proceedings, it is in all probability the best, as it is certainly the largest and most commodious. It is unnecessary for us to enter into a technical account of the manner in which the interior of the great hall has been remodelled. The performances of the society during the last month, have been Handel's *Messiah* (twice), and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*.—*From the Times*.

DR. BEXFIELD has just completed an Oratorio, the title of which is *Israel Restored*.

HANDEL'S "MESSIAH."—The Oratorio has been performed this winter almost daily during the last month in various parts of the Metropolis.—It is satisfactory to find how many opportunities the public have of becoming intimate with its many beauties: we must content ourselves with merely instancing a few of the occasions.—Mr. Hullah, at St. Martin's Hall, without Mozart's Accompaniments, and reinstating the movements which have latterly been omitted.—The opening of the new Chapel attached to the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum, Old Kent Road, on 17th December.—The Sacred Harmonic Society, at Exeter Hall.

BAGPIPES.—An air played on the bagpipes, with that detestable, monotonous drone of theirs for the bass, is like a tune tied to a post.—*Leigh Hunt's Table-Talk*.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

The Mutual Life Assurance Society,

39, King-street, Cheapside.

The Society is constituted on purely mutual principles, the entire profits being divided amongst the Members. The Divisions of Profit are made annually on the 31st December, in which every Member participates who has paid two annual premiums on his Policy.

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Masham, Yorkshire, October 21st, 1850,